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RUEHGT/AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA PRIORITY 0328
RUEHLP/AMEMBASSY LA PAZ PRIORITY 5164
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA PRIORITY 3356
RUEHMN/AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO PRIORITY 6748
RUEHOT/AMEMBASSY OTTAWA PRIORITY 1016
RUEHPU/AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE PRIORITY 0173
RUEHQH/AMEMBASSY QUITO PRIORITY 2129
RUEHSG/AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO PRIORITY 6089
RUEHRC/AMCONSUL RECIFE PRIORITY 6245
RUEHRI/AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO PRIORITY 3872
RUEHSO/AMCONSUL SAO PAULO PRIORITY 9231
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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 BRASILIA 000277

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TAGS: PREL BR

SUBJECT: BRAZIL: AMBASSADOR'S JANUARY 30 DINNER WITH
GENERAL ARMANDO FELIX, BRAZILIAN MINISTER FOR INSTITUTIONAL
SECURITY.

Classified By: POLITICAL COUNSELOR DENNIS HEARNE. REASONS: 1.4 (B)(D).

¶1. (S) Summary. Ambassador hosted a dinner for Brazilian Minister for Institutional Security, General Armando Felix on January 30. Felix was accompanied by his newly appointed deputy, Major General Ruben Peixoto Alexandre. Political Counselor and Regional Affairs Officer were in attendance. The Ambassador invited Felix to dinner to discuss the upcoming visits to Brazil by senior USG officials, as well as a number of bilateral liaison relationship topics. Ambassador also asked for Felix's views on closer Brazilian ties to NATO. Felix was in a relaxed mood and frank in his discussions, while Alexandre remained silent for most of the evening. End Summary.

¶2. (S) The Ambassador had requested the dinner in order to discuss the upcoming visit of the U.S. Attorney General and to gauge Felix's willingness to meet with the AG, and assist in setting up a meeting with the Presidential Chief of Staff for Brazilian President Lula, Dilma Rousseff. (Note: The meetings did occur, per Felix's commitment. End note.) The likelihood of a late 2007 visit of the DCIA was also discussed, and Felix repeated throughout the meeting that he believed Brazil's intelligence relationship with the USG was extremely important to Brazil, and that continued communication between the two respective intelligence services was vital because of the ability to communicate frankly and rapidly without the obstacles of protocol and bureaucracy.

¶3. (S) Felix stated he was disappointed over the U.S. Treasury unilateral designations of triborder area Hizballah targets. For continued joint CT Operations in Brazil his expectation is that the USG will treat the Brazilians as equals and not take this type of unilateral action in the future without first coordinating with the Brazilian government.

¶ 4. (S) Ambassador noted a recent meeting between Brazilian Foreign Minister Amorim and Dutch Foreign Minister Bot, in which the Dutch Minister explained the benefits of cooperative relations with NATO. Ambassador asked Felix -- as Lula's security advisor and a senior military officer -- for his views on the issue.

¶ 5. (S) Felix appeared circumspect and said that Brazilians must face the fact that "a price must be paid" to attain a global leadership role. Brazil must be willing to modernize and deploy its forces for international operations and confront the prospect "of body bags returning to Brazil." Felix said that he, both personally and as a military man, believed the time had come for Brazil to pay the price and assume a leadership position in world affairs. He opined that closer cooperation with NATO would be received positively as an issue for discussion with Brazil's military leaders, many of whom share Felix's view.

¶ 6. (S) Regarding Venezuela, Bogota and Bolivia, General Felix down played the rhetoric of Venezuelan President Chavez, saying he had little influence on Brazilian internal politics, and that as long as neighboring governments were democratically elected, Brazil would try to be as accommodating as possible to their particular political idiosyncrasies. He commented that Chavez is receiving primarily negative press in Brazil, and that only a small percentage of political fringe groups might actually support Chavez in Brazil. Felix also believed that Morales in Bolivia poses little political threat to Brazilian interests, but was concerned about Bolivian narcotrafficking and its impact on crime in Brazil's major cities. Felix stated that

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he was unaware of any FARC related risks to Brazil, but committed to working with both the USG and Colombian to support the democratically elected government of President Uribe. This included working together against transnational crime targets, including narcotrafficking, money laundering, and arms trafficking.

¶ 7. (S) Felix also discussed the political versus operational coordination of such collaboration. Felix gave his approval for expanding cooperation, but did not make any new commitments during the meeting. Felix expressed his intention to keep the USG engaged with them over intelligence and threat planning for the Pan American Games currently scheduled for summer 2007 in Rio de Janeiro, stating that preparations were progressing well.

¶ 8. (S) Comment. Felix was remarkably candid, causing some visible surprise in his deputy. It will be interesting to see whether Felix retains his position, and this frank communication with us can go on.

Sobel